

Human Rights Committee Background Statement

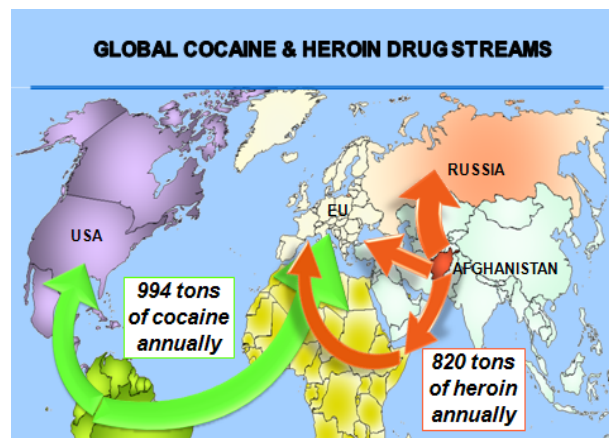
Procedural Reminder: Delegates are reminded that at the PACMUN Conference, they are ***not*** expected to arrive with complete resolutions. Delegates are expected to prepare a policy statement that can be read in one minute and three solid operative clauses with which to caucus and kick-off debates. Resolutions are expected to emerge from the debates in the committees.

TOPIC IS DRUG PRODUCTION A LIVELIHOOD OR A CRIME?
CHAIR ARIADNE LEMIEUX-CUMBERLEGE

Is illegal drug production a livelihood or a crime? This question will be at the center of the debates that will take place in the Human Rights committee at PACMUN this year. Everyone in the world has the “right to work, to free choice of employment (...)”. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights ratified in 1948 and signed by over 50 countries in the world certifies this.

Drug production and trafficking occur in many parts of the world and Latin America is certainly considered as an area of primary production. Common illegal drugs trafficked internationally include cocaine, heroin, and synthetic drugs.

Penalties associated with such activities range from a fine to death penalty. Offences are generally severely punished. In 2008, 1.5 million Americans were arrested for drug offences and 500,000 were imprisoned. Although capital punishment is not often used, it can occur. In 2010, two people were sentenced to death in Malaysia for trafficking 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of cannabis into the country. In 2011, the Chinese government executed three Filipinos for drug trafficking.



<http://www.fskn.gov.ru/includes/periodics/eventsmain/2011/>



<http://mondediplo.com/maps/drugs>

Although Latin America is one of the biggest illegal drug markets in the world, drug consumption remains low in comparison to other drug producing regions such as North America or Western Europe. Many people believe that even though many Latin Americans take part in the production or trafficking of drugs they should not be punished since they have no employment alternative and do not use the drugs. However, trafficking is often connected to murders, attacks and robberies. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 2001, 90% of the murders committed in Mexico were drug related. Drugs are expensive and many addicts resort to shoplifting and robbery to be able to cover their drug habit cost. The UK recently filed a report stating that 85% of shoplifting, 70-

80% of burglaries and 54% of robberies were drug related. Unfortunately, these statistics often overshadow the case of people who, out of necessity, have jobs in the drug production and trafficking industry.

People engage in drug production primarily in response to meet their economic needs. Farmers working on drug plantations can make 10 to 50 times more than they would in any other agricultural pursuit. There is support for encouraging governments to find solutions to the economic crisis and focus on creating employment not related to this destructive industry.

The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) spends a lot of time working on alternative employment opportunities for those in the drug industry who wish for an honest job. Many of the men and women who are involved in drug production or trafficking are dedicated parents or good citizens. However they often have no choice because of the low standing in jobs. In countries like Afghanistan, Bolivia, Colombia, Laos, Myanmar and Peru, UNODC is building a counter-narcotic strategy in which agro forestry, forest management, gender equality, commercial performance of farmer enterprise are promoted to improve the security and safety of all. UNODC's main goal is to ensure that everyone has access to an honorable job.

In addition to creating jobs, over the past few years, progressive legislation has also been passed to create alternative options for drug addicts. This legislation includes educational and employment opportunities.

Issues remain however as there continues to be little employment alternative for workers who are forced to participate in the drug economy to survive. As a result, drug production increases every day. Afghanistan, for example, has just seen a dramatic swell in their opium farm production of 133 percent since 2010. It is your responsibility as delegates to help solve these problems. At the conference you will have to be prepared to answer the questions below and know your countries drug laws.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Are the economic opportunities of drug trafficking worth the consequences?
- What kind of employment could be created to offer a true alternative to drug related jobs?
- Does your country's drug legislation provide sufficient job support for families so that they may find a respectable job?
- How can the Human Rights Committee stop drugs from Latin America from being sold in other countries?
- What position should the Human Rights Committee take in addressing the legalization of drugs?
- Should the Human Rights committee create a sub-committee to focus on this topic? What would be the goals of this subcommittee?
- Should the United Nations develop treaties to abolish the production of illegal drug?
- Will the UN support the use of force to stop the production of illegal drugs and drug trafficking?

HELPFUL LINKS:

United Nations office on Drugs and Crime:

<http://www.unodc.org/>

International Drug Control Policy:

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34543.pdf>

Plan Colombia

http://www.state.gov/www/regions/wha/colombia/fs_000328_plancolombia.html

Information about Drug Production:

<http://www.drugscope.org.uk/resources/goodpractice/statisticsandavailability/drugmarkets>

The Christian Science Monitor (article) – UN: Latin American Undermining Drug War by Decriminalizing Drugs

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/2010/0224/UN-Latin-America-undermining-drug-war-by-decriminalizing-drugs>

stopthedrugwar.org – Feature: UN, Western Nations Complicit in Drug Offender Executions, Report says

http://stopthedrugwar.org/chronicle/2010/jun/25/feature_un_western_nations_compl

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TOPIC **CHILD ABUSE AND CHILD LABOR**
CHAIR **ALYSSA KASER**

Child labor and child abuse are devastating issues worldwide. Child abuse is the emotional, physical, or sexual mistreatment, or neglect of a child. Child labor is defined as the illegal use of child workers in an industry or business.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), around 246 million children between the ages of 5 and 17 are involved in child labor. 171 million of these children are involved in work that is hazardous to their safety, mental or physical health, and moral development. Around 8.4 million children were engaged in so-called 'unconditional' worst forms of child labor. These include forced and bonded labor, the use of children in armed conflict, trafficking in children and commercial sexual exploitation. There is an overwhelming majority of girls who are subjected to child labor and abuse. Typically, children who are involved in child labor do not attend school.

Poor countries have the greatest amount of child laborers as they make up cheap employment.



<http://discussionpage-english.blogspot.com/2010/12/child-neglect.html>

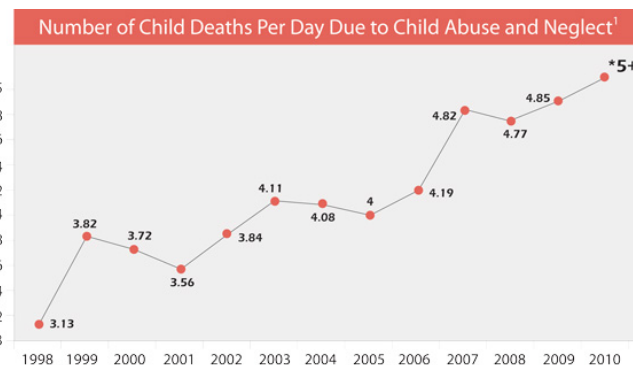


In Latin American countries, such as Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, a lot of child abuse and child labor takes place (UNICEF 2006). According to Colombia's Institute of Family Welfare, around 2.5 million of the country's children are compelled to work. Surprisingly, the numbers have doubled since Colombia signed an ILO treaty 6 years ago banning the worst forms of child labor.

Furthermore, approximately 40 million children are abused every year according to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2002). In 2002, suicide was the third leading cause of death in children and teenagers. Studies conducted by UNICEF show that over a 10-year time span, around 2 million children have died due to physical abuse and another 6 million were severely injured or permanently disabled. Causes of child abuse vary but

many children who live in poor countries are subjected to child abuse. Countries that struggle with poverty also have high percentages of violent households, which generates a high incidence of home child abuse.

UNICEF has contributed to strengthening many child protection legal systems to ensure that children grow up in a safe environment. More still needs to be done. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the first international legal tool to set the full range of children's human rights in 54 articles and two Protocols—civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- In what way can the Human Rights Committee put the Convention on the Rights of the Child in action?
- How can the Human Rights Committee develop policy to eradicate child labor and child abuse?
- Are governments doing enough to eradicate child abuse and child labor?
- How can governments better enforce their legislation and align with UN policies related to child issues?
- What sanctions should be considered when countries resort to child labor?
- What sanctions should be considered when countries import goods from countries that resort to child labor?

HELPFUL LINKS:

The Convention on the Rights of the Child:

<http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

Child Rights International Network:

<http://www.crin.org/ngogroupforcrc/>

UNICEF on child protection from violence and abuse:

http://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_57990.html

Child Labor:

http://www.un.org/works/goignon/labor/lessonplan_labor.html

<http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/briefingpapers/childlabour/index.shtml>

Child labor and abuse in Latin America:

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2099200,00.html>

<http://globalvoicesonline.org/2009/06/10/latin-america-the-problem-of-child-labor-part-i/>

Articles related to child labor:

<http://www.malaya.com.ph/01202012/agri2.html>

<http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/may2005/amer-m11.shtml>

International Labor Organization:

<http://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/index.htm>